

Wednesday, October 27, 2004  
1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**Session A-6: Policy and Practice, Science, and Economic Considerations for Nutrition and Physical Activity in the Workplace**

“Translation and Dissemination of Best and Promising Practices for Obesity Prevention and Control in the Workplace” Michelle Reyes

**Key Items:**

**Public Health Problems**

- 65% of adults are obese/overweight
- 18% of children are obese/overweight
- costs for employers are skyrocketing

**Workplace Issues**

- What can employers do about obesity epidemic
- How do we reduce morbidity and costs
- How do we increase productivity

**CDC Strategies**

- Conduct evidence-based literature reviews to identify interventions that work
- Translate findings
- Disseminate best and promising practices

**Community Guide**

- Population-based prevention strategies
- DHHS initiative, CDC staff support

**Dissemination Venues**

- Press release
- Website repository
- Meetings
- Trade conferences
- Passing supportive legislation/policies/recommendations

“Influence of the Workplace on Nutrition” Linda Schuessler

**Key Items**

- Employers are focusing more on healthier foods & better nutrition

- Shift in focus relates to attitudes, social norms & culture
- Comprehensive Nutrition Interventions
  - Sorensen review:
    - On-site healthful food options
    - Reduced price or free food option
    - Point-of-choice labeling and signage
    - Management/organization support
  - Comprehensive programs
  - Social ecological model
  - Employee involvement
  - Multiple risk factors interventions
  - Tailored interventions
- Gaps in knowledge
  - Most research is based on behavior rather than environment
  - Research is needed on barriers and enablers
    - Environmental
    - Policy change
    - Cost effectiveness
  - Secondary prevention—research needed
    - Disease management programs
    - Nutrition benefits in the health plan

“An Integrated Program to Reduce Low-Back Injuries in the Workplace – Successes and Barriers in Practice” Jennifer A. Hess

#### Key Items

- Ergonomics
  - Preventing workplace injuries by designing jobs to fit the needs of workers
  - Stretching & fitness are not a part of ergonomics
- Stretching
  - One component of fitness
  - Elongates muscles/tendons to create greater elasticity
  - May contribute to injury prevention
- Reality
  - Little evidence supporting effectiveness of stretching
  - No stretching program guidelines
  - Ergonomic solutions more likely to be more effective and permanent
- Successes
  - Positive experience for contractor and workers
  - Ergonomics
    - Skid plates decreases stresses to low back
    - Worker participation increases the tool effectiveness

- Stretching
    - Most workers willing to participate
    - Good for morale and team building
    - Builds awareness
- Barriers
  - Overall
    - Dissemination needed for ultimate success of both
  - Ergonomics
    - Requires management and worker buy-in
    - May be expensive
    - May require retraining
  - Stretching
    - No association between flexibility and injury rates
    - May be difficult to keep programs “fresh”
- Conclusions
  - Nonvalidated stretching programs may have negative impact on promotion of fitness programs
  - Ergonomic solutions more likely to have lasting effects for musculoskeletal injury prevention

#### Discussion comments from session audience

- Education is important – need to know what is going on inside the body
- Develop culturally aware messages
- Issue of the organization & how flexible the employer–what is he/she willing to give up to allow employees to participate in an exercise program
- Tools and support for the lay audience
- Offer good incentives to build participation
- Companies need to add exercise equipment
- How do you focus on healthy behaviors?
  - Place fruits and vegetables out instead of cake/doughnuts
  - Place healthier foods in vending machines
  - Change menu at cafeteria/snack bar
- **Change doesn’t happen overnight and every little bit of change counts!**